ciety in which our ancestors lived, and which is delightfully contrasted with the present times.

It would be instructive to compare the old gate-houses of this country with the analogous structures met with in the architectural remains of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, so as to deduce from their respective characteristics the history of the people to whom they owed their origin. Mr. Britton briefly mentioned the peculiarities of some interesting ancient gateways, including the Propylæa of the great temples of Luxor and Carnac, in Egypt; that of the Acropolis of Athens, the portæ, or gate-houses, in the walls of Rome, and a gateway to Herculaneum; illustrating most of them by reference to some well-executed drawings.

After alluding to the fortification of some English cities by the Romans, he proceeded to consider the gate-houses erected by our ancestors since the Roman conquest. The forms of these were greatly diversified according to their purposes and objects. They had generally a large archway for travellers on horse-back or in carriages, with one, or sometimes two, posterns, or side arches, of smaller dimensions, for pedestrians. These archways were generally vaulted over, and ornamented with ribs and bosses. Above was an apartment, reached by means of a winding staircase, wherein the warder, or porter, lived, and where, in time of need, a small band of guards could be placed to defend the entrance. In this apartment the apparatus was worked to raise or lower the portcullis.

The upper stories of gate-houses were in the form of a tower externally, more or less elevated, with or without turrets at the angles, and generally terminated in a plain or machicolated parapet. Some of the gate-houses of old English mansions, and of ecclesiastical, palatinal, and collegiate edifices, were richly decorated with niches, statues, buttresses, pinnacles, panelling, &c.; but those of castles and city walls were plainer, and adapted rather to defensive purposes than ornament or domestic comfort.

Mr. Britton described the gate-houses of London, York, Southampton, Canterbury, Lincoln, Wells,* and other English cities, and afterwards proceeded to notice those of Norwich.

The history of the fortifications of this city is narrated in "Blomefield's Norwich;" who states, from authentic records, that the walls were begun in 1294, and that a *mirage*, or tax, was levied upon the inhabitants, by virtue of royal authority, to enable the civic functionaries to proceed with their erection. Similar imposts were levied on the citizens, from time to time, till 1319 or 1320, when the walls are said to have been finished.

In 1342, the gates and towers of the city, not having been previously fitted up, were "fortified and made fit to dwell in," by Richard Spynk, citizen of Norwich, who gave "thirty *espringolds*, or warlike instruments, to cast great stones with, to be always kept at the different gates, and to every espringold one hundred *gogions* or balls, locked up in a box with ropes and other accoutrements belonging to them; and also four great *arblasters* or cross-bows, and to each of them one hundred *gogions* or balls, and two pair of *graples* to draw up the bows with." He also expended 200*l.* in enlarging and deepening the ditches belonging to the city walls; and other large sums in various extensive works to most of the gates and towers. On the bank of the river Wensum, at the southern extremity of the city, the wall terminated in a large and lofty round tower. Opposite to this, on the east side of the river, Richard Spynk erected a similar tower, "and made two great chains to go cross from tower to tower, so that no vessel could enter the city by the river without leave; and he fixed an instrument to the tower, on the west side of the river, to wind the chains upon." This defence of the river passage was called the *boom*. The same truly patriotic citizen further "offered another hundred pounds, if any would raise as much more, to finish all the towers in the same manner as those he had done; and when no man would undertake to do it in that manner, the said Richard undertook it and performed it, by God's grace." Some other curious historical particulars respecting the walls and gatehouses are given in Blomefield's history; proving, amongst other things, that each of the parishes in the city was liable in ancient times to an assessment for the repair of a distinct and definite portion of the walls and gates.

The city gates were originally twelve in number; but one of them, called *Heigham Gate*, was taken down previously to 1741, when Blomefield's history was published. That industrious antiquary, John Carter, visited Norwich in 1786, and made a series of slight but effective sketches of the remaining eleven gate-houses, which were then in a tolerable state. These, together with all his other sketches (arranged and bound in thirty-seven folio volumes), are now in Mr. Britton's possession. Since Carter's time, the whole of these interesting structures have been taken down, to *improve* the approaches to the city.

Mr. Britton exhibited to the meeting copies of Carter's drawings, and explained the leading characteristics of each of the gate-houses, and their respective positions in the city walls. Their names and arrangement were as follows, commencing from the River Gate, or Boom, already mentioned, at the southern extremity of the city, and proceeding in a north-westerly direction round the walls.

1. *Conisford Gate*, or the *South Gate*, a plain square tower gateway, with two small loop-holes, or windows. Like all the rest, this gate-house consisted of one archway only, for foot and carriage passengers, and had a bold embattled parapet.

2. *Ber-street Gate*, a square tower, flanked and protected by a lofty round tower; both perforated with oilet-holes in the form of a cross. This was formerly the most frequented entrance to the whole city, being the principal access to the castle.

3. *Brazen Door*, a plain square tower, of considerable width in proportion to its height. This derived its name from having originally been closed with doors, or gates of brass, which were afterwards probably replaced by iron ones, as it is often described as the *Iron Door*. *The Newgate*, and *Swine-market Gate* are other names formerly applied to this gate.

4. *St. Stephen's Gate*, formerly called *Needham Gate*, was the most imposing of the series in its architectural form and appearance; being flanked on each side by a bold and massive round tower. An ornamental moulding over the archway of the exterior side, formed a junction with a plain and prominent string course around each tower. The apartment above the arch was lighted by a small triple, lancet-headed window, with canopied mouldings.

5. *St. Giles's Gate*, the most western of the series, was a plain square embattled tower, with one small window in its external face, and in this, as in several of the others, was a small square sunk panel, above the archway, sculptured with armorial bearings.

6. *St Benedict's Gate* was formerly called *Westwyck Gate*, according to Blomefield, because it stood on the western *wic*, or *winding*, of the river. It had an archway of considerable width, the tower above being square, with a double window of semi circular arches. The barbican, or wall, projecting from the face of the tower, on each side of the approach, remained when Carter made his drawings. Next to this stood *Heigham Gate*, as already noticed, which Blomefield says "was called *Helle Gate*, from its low situation, and the odd appearance that the street leading to it hath to any one that looks down it, being a prodigious chasm and declivity, like the entrance of the ancient poet's hell. This was a postern only." Here the continuity of the walls was broken by the river entering the city.

Resuming the line, on the northern side of the city, were the following gates:—

7. *St. Martin's*, formerly called *Coslany Gate*, a plain square tower, similar to the two last described in its general form, but differing somewhat from each of the others in its proportions. A part of it, converted into a dwelling-house, still remains.

8. *St. Augustine's*; and

9. *Magdalen Gate* (formerly *Fibridge Gate*) differed but slightly from the preceding. The latter had a loop-hole of peculiar form and a small window.

10. *Pockthorpe*, or *Barr Gate*, was at the north-east angle of the city, near the point where the wall again joined the river. This was also a square tower, and was the last in the line of the city walls.

The east side of the city was undefended by a wall, being sufficiently protected by the river. Over this, some distance to the southward, is the Bishop's Bridge, which is the eastern access to the city; and leads directly to the Bishop's Palace and Cathedral. This entrance was guarded by another gate-house called *Bishop's Gate* (11), which, in conjunction with the bridge, was the most picturesque of the whole. It was square, with an octagonal turret at each angle, and a barbican on the exterior side. Above the outer archway was a sculptured panel, and over the inner arch a large double window. This completed the series of twelve fortified gate-houses.

In addition to the *gate-houses* above enumerated, Mr. Britton referred to those others forming the entrances to the cathedral, the bishop's palace, and other buildings in the Close of Norwich. These are known as the *Erpingham*, *St. Ethelbert's*, and the *Bishop's Palace Gates*.

The first of these is remarkable for its history and architectural enrichments. It was built by Sir Thomas Erpingham in the reign of Henry IV., as a penance for having espoused and advocated the cause of Wicliff. Its exterior face is singularly and profusely adorned with niches, sculptured statues, birds, shields, &c. The lecturer gave a particular description of this building from his "History of Norwich Cathedral," and his "Picturesque Antiquities of English Cities," in which there are engravings of this, and of St. Ethelbert's gate-houses.

St. Ethelbert's Gate-house appears to have been erected, in like manner, by the citizens of Norwich, as an atonement for injury done to the cathedral and its gates, in an insurrection which occurred in the year 1272. It is adorned with tracery, niches, basso-relievos, &c.: over it is a chapel.

The Bishop's Palace Gate-house was mostly built by Bishop Alnwick about 1430, and finished by Bishop Lyhart about 1470. The spandrils of the principal archway are filled with rich tracery-mouldings, inclosing blank shields. Over the arches is a very elaborate frieze of panelled compartments, inclosing other shields. Above these is a niche with a statue, crowned. The parapet appears to have been formerly enriched with tracery and embrasures.

In conclusion, Mr. Britton observed, that if his essay had been regarded as too prolix, or in any way irrelevant, or tedious, the fault should be ascribed to him, and not to the subject; for every object of antiquity must interest the fancy as well as the judgment of well-informed and laudably curious minds. The buildings of bye-gone times, and of distant countries, were the most valuable relics and memorials of man in his civil history; and therefore entitled to the diligent study of the antiquary, the architect, and the critic. The various objects of archæology furnished indeed most irrefragable evidence of the manners and customs, as well as the arts and sciences of the human race, from the earliest dawn of civilization. Hence the well-stored museum might be regarded as the record office of the antiquary; and every ancient relic as well as every broken fragment, constituted a chapter or an anecdote in the annals of the world.

And now we must away from the city, glad to escape for a time from the sharp stones with which its streets are "fanged." A glide on the iron road, and a short steam across Breydon Water bring us to

BURGH CASTLE,

A remnant of Roman dominion, which has been recently purchased by Sir John Boileau (pleasant, fluent Sir John), in order that it may be carefully preserved.

As was charmingly said in a speech to which we have before referred,—"It is crumbling beneath the weight of centuries,—the pride of the Roman Conqueror has been humbled, it has been shorn of its splendour—and that castle which was once redolent with imperial munificence, and upon whose walls the haughty warrior proudly reared his flag of victory and

* The lecturer's account of the bishop's palace, cathedral, and ecclesiastical buildings of Wells, with reference to a carefully drawn plan, by the late John Carter, was very interesting.

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